

Municipal Funding Option

To: Honored Co-Chairs Sen. Cohen and Rep. Gresko, Vice Chairs Sen. Slap and Rep. Palm, Ranking Members Sen. Miner and Rep. Harding, Distinguished Members of the Environment Committee

From: Ellen Castaldini, 400 Seabury Drive, Apt. 3121, Bloomfield, CT 06002

I am commenting in support of HB 6441 that will fund climate adaptation and resilience projects.

Section 3 of the bill will give municipalities an option to establish a buyer's conveyance fee to fund land stewardship, climate resilience, and other environmental projects in our communities. Towns across the state could use these funds to support local projects such as conserving open space, combatting invasive species in lakes, testing for brownfield remediation, stewardship of urban parks, creating woodland trails, matching state and federally funded grants, and many other environmental projects.

Bloomfield's Conservation, Energy and Environment Committee and its Trees subgroup that has newly organized a Trees for Bloomfield program would greatly benefit from the additional funding this bill would provide. Trees play a critical role in drawing down the carbon pollution from our extensive, ongoing use of fossil fuels. Developing and maintaining a Trees for Bloomfield program is an expensive venture. For example, purchasing new trees, maintaining the health of current trees, need more money that tends to be budgeted for in most towns.

Many towns have voiced their desire to have a local conveyance fee option to help their conservation efforts. This is not just a one-time infusion of money to purchase land – this is a long-term sustainable funding stream that will help our land, water and climate for generations.

I urge you to support HB6441 and give municipalities the freedom to choose the financial tools best suited to their local environmental needs.

Thank you.